

Where Have All the FSMAOs Gone? Gone to Logistics Modernization Teams . . . Every One!

A new era is beginning.

by Col James D. Turlip

Dating back to at least 1968, the Marine Corps' Field Supply and Maintenance Analysis Offices (FSMAOs) at Camp Lejeune, Camp Pendleton, and Camp Butler, Okinawa, Japan represented a unique fusion of unparalleled supply, maintenance, and maintenance management process and policy expertise. They also demonstrated a seemingly maniacal insistence on perfection in adhering to these processes and policies during periodic "analyses" conducted for every unit throughout the Marine Corps.

If you had a question on virtually any obscure aspect of supply or maintenance policy, they were the trusted sources of information. If they didn't have an answer, they would either get one or collaborate with other offices and higher headquarters to get one. When notification came that they were coming to analyze a unit or account, no commander or logistician can honestly say he relished such visits, even if he may have seen them as necessary evils to enforce compliance with Marine Corps policy.

The transition of FSMAOs into LMTs is certainly the passing of an era, but onlookers should be encouraged by the opportunities this change brings.

However, in 2002 Marines who had come to expect these periodic visits noted that the FSMAOs did not come calling anymore. Closer inspection quickly shows that FSMAOs—as generations of Marines and sailors have known them since 1968—no longer exist, and a few

commanders have begun to wish for "the good old days."

However, before the eulogy for the FSMAOs is finalized, it may be worthwhile to examine why this change was made and what the Operating Forces stand to gain through the newly tagged logistics modernization (LogMod) teams (LMTs).

First, although almost nobody ever really paused to consider the ramifications in their heyday, FSMAOs, in their analytical role, represented one of the more egregious violations of the chain of command. By injecting Commandant of the Marine Corps representatives into units that could be separated from CMC by up to six or seven levels of intermediate command, the program basically communicated a mistrust of intermediate commanders to effectively enforce logistics policy in their commands.

Second, and more importantly, as the Marine Corps continues its most substantial overhaul of logistics processes, systems, and organizations since the 1970s, CMC needed a

dedicated change agent within the Operating Forces to help prepare for these seminal changes when the Global Combat Support System-Marine Corps (GCSS-MC) is fielded in 2007. Although 2007 may seem far off, the LMTs are very busy preparing for this fielding.

We have LMT members in Iraq today with II Marine Expeditionary Force (II MEF) helping to identify and remedy logistics chain distribution challenges. On the west coast, LMT members have helped with systems testing at the Marine Corps Tactical Systems Support Activity. They are working to ensure that the communications equipment and bandwidth are in place and available to loggies so logistics data can be transmitted and received rapidly. All LMTs have participated in the various Materiel Readiness Improvement Program efforts, including the realignment of supply and realignment of maintenance working integrated process teams (WIPTs) that have been held. In III MEF, the team is assisting with efforts to shift "inspect and repair only as necessary" repairs on some equipment to the Army's Materiel Support Center-Korea (MSC-K).

LMT-Western Pacific has hosted WIPTs and facilitated communications between III MEF, Logistics Command, and MSC-K, resulting in procedures and processes for bringing selected equipment into the master work schedule at MSC-K. The teams are helping to spearhead implementation of the common logistics command and control system as a test case for the critical role they will play in the GCSS-MC fielding process. Additionally, the teams are involved in expanding in-transit visibility/radio frequency identification efforts for each of their supported MEFs.

There are also LogMod liaison officers who serve as direct representatives of the Deputy Commandant, Installations and Logistics. They are placed within each Operating Forces G-4 (logistics) shop to help coordinate communications between Headquarters Marine Corps (HQMC), the LMTs, and the MEFs and manage expectations of LogMod deliverables within the Operating Forces. Additionally, they ensure that HQMC is apprised of major logistics issues and concerns facing the MEFs.

The transition of FSMAOs into LMTs is certainly the passing of an era, but onlookers should be encouraged by the opportunities this change brings. LMTs' experience in

noting chronic problems in visited units makes them well-positioned to help drive future policies, processes, and systems configurations to better enable more effective logistics support within the Operating Forces.

long it takes to inventory personal effects like the old days. Instead, they will be helping units to really focus on streamlining the logistics processes that are key to mission accomplishment. We want to ensure

>Col Turlip is currently serving as the Logistics Vision and Strategy Center Head, Installations and Logistics, HQMC, and oversees the LMTs. Earning his master's degree in supply chain and information systems management while assigned as senior CMC logistics fellow at Penn State University in 2003-04, he once served as the Assistant Officer in Charge and Senior Supply Analyst, FSMAO-2, Camp Pendleton.

We want to ensure that the benefits coming with LogMod get all the way down to the last rifleman in the last fire team of the last squad. . . .

Once their major contributions to our LogMod efforts have been completed, don't be too surprised to see the LMTs visiting individual units again on a regular schedule. When they do, they probably won't be counting canteen cups and shelter halves, or checking to see how

that the benefits coming with LogMod get all the way down to the last rifleman in the last fire team of the last squad, to keep him focused on locating and destroying our enemies and unconcerned with the logistics that makes it possible in any clime and place.

10th Annual TDG Contest

Tactical decision games (TDGs) have come to be recognized as a most effective means of developing tactical insights and preparing leaders to make sound tactical decisions under combat conditions. TDGs have become a major component in professional military education programs at every level throughout the Corps.

In keeping with this guidance, we invite you to submit games that you have developed and played successfully in your units as well as new games that you believe are particularly pertinent for future Marine Corps operations.

A prize of \$200 will be awarded to the best game at each of the five levels specified in the Contest Rules. Special recognition may also be given to selected Honorable Mention entries.

Contest Rules

- The contest is open to everyone.
- Entries must be original and not have been published elsewhere. They may be based on a historic battle and use similar terrain, providing the situation is not readily identifiable and the scenario reflects present-day forces.
- Entries should be postmarked no later than Monday, 31 October 2005 and mailed to TDG Contest, *Marine Corps Gazette*, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134, or e-mail your entry to <gazette@mca-marines.org>.
- Each entry should have a cover sheet showing the (1) name of the game; (2) level of the game; (3) author's name, address, telephone numbers; and (4) last four digits of the author's SSN.
- The author's name should appear only on the cover sheet. The last four digits of the author's SSN should appear in the upper right-hand corner of EVERY PAGE including maps.
- Entries should be typed, double spaced, and include (1) text of the game (no more than 700 words); (2) sketch map to accompany the game; (3) solution in the form of orders, reports, and requests plus the explanation (totaling no more than 500 words); (4) a second copy of map overdrawn to show author's solution; and (5) although not to be published with game, a brief listing of the concepts/lessons the game is designed to emphasize.
- Games will compete at five levels: (1) fire team, squad, and section; (2) platoon; (3) company; (4) battalion; and (5) MAGTF (any size from special purpose through MEF). There are no restrictions on the number of entries submitted.
- Games should be based on current Marine Corps structure and equipment.
- All entries should follow previously published TDGs in format and style.

Deadline—31 October 2005